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An NRC Mining Company Report

Comparisons of Subscribers and Non-Subscribers

By Edna Einsiedel

HIGHLIGHTS: This report on subscribers and non-subscribers is based on 48 proprietary studies in 34 different markets across the United States and Canada. These studies show that subscribers more frequently cite the newspaper as their primary source of news and, compared to non-subscribers, tend to have more positive images of the newspaper. There is some evidence that subscribers have a stronger orientation to the print media. Even in their use of radio and television, subscribers have a stronger orientation to news than do non-subscribers. Other data is presented on single copy buyers and on the demographics, political interest and content preferences of subscribers and non-subscribers.

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NRC Mining Company

The data files on most newspaper research operations are an untapped gold mine of information about newspaper readership. The purpose of the NRC Mining Company is to refine and extract this valuable information from accumulated ore and make it available to editors, publishers and newspaper researchers.

Its been said that many of the empty categories in ANPA's extensive review of the readership research completed over the past 25 years (ANPA News Research Reports No. 3 and No. 22) could be filed with information from existing research data—if only someone had the time to hunt it down and to analyze it.

But in the press of everyday concerns, the data from a study is analyzed to meet the immediate questions at hand and then filed away. For example, a simple survey with 20 questions yields 190 two-way cross-tabulations, far more than typically analyzed or reported.

To remedy this situation, at least in part, the NRC Mining Company is collecting and organizing this research. More than 300 proprietary research reports have been obtained so far.

The NRC Mining Company project was initiated in 1982 as a coordinated effort of the ANPA News Research Center, the Newspaper Readership Council and the Newspaper Research Council.

This summary, comparing subscribers and non-subscribers is the second in a series of literature reviews being prepared from these materials. Another report in preparation will review the research on regular vs. occasional readers.

Comparisons of Subscribers and Non-Subscribers

By Edna Einsiedel

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Subscriptions are an important part of a newspaper's total circulation. In terms of readership, subscribing implies a greater commitment to and interest in newspaper reading as a consequence of having the newspaper in one's home regularly. This is illustrated by the recent finding that "69 percent of all subscribers read a newspaper on all five of the past weekdays (while) less than a fourth of 'yesterday' readers without home delivery have read a newspaper on all five of the last five weekdays."

The family as a social institution has undergone changes that have consequences for newspaper reading in general and newspaper subscribing in particular. As Bogart has observed:

> The more adults there are in a household, the more chances that a newspaper will be bought; the more stable the family structure, the more chances that reading will follow a routine and that a newspaper will be delivered regularly. With more loners and floaters, the sale of newspaper subscriptions becomes more difficult. A regular subscription is less convenient for individuals who lead an irregular existence. They are harder to contact, to sell to, to collect from. They are likely to have a smaller household income than families with more than one breadwinner. Accordingly, the cost of a subscription is a bigger item in their budgets.[1]

Households have been growing at a faster rate than ever and the nature of households has changed dramatically, including more single-person households, fewer children, and more children in single-parent families. These factors, among others, have had an influence on newspaper readership.

This report is about newspaper subscribing: what kinds of people subscribe to a newspaper and why. It is based on an analysis of market data in 34 different markets around the country.

Summary of Findings

- While the demographic patterns vary somewhat from market to market, subscribers tend to be older, to have higher incomes, more education and white collar jobs, own their homes, and to have resided in the community for a longer time than non-subscribers.

- Subscribers more frequently cite the newspaper as their primary source of news and, compared to non-subscribers, tend to have more positive images of the newspaper.

- There is some evidence that newspaper subscribers have a stronger orientation to the print media.

- Even in their use of radio and television subscribers have a stronger orientation to news than do non-subscribers.

- While there are some scattered differences in the content preferences of subscribers and non-subscribers, the primary finding across markets is that subscribers are more interested in almost every type of newspaper content.

- Part of the reason why some people subscribe to a daily newspaper while others do not lies in their interest and participation in politics, including their belief that they have a civic obligation to keep up with the news.

- Presence of a newspaper in the home as a child and use of a newspaper in the classroom both are related to higher levels of subscribing as an adult. These relationships are especially true among non-whites.

- Scattered market reports indicate that regular single copy buyers are likely to cite delivery problems as a reason for not subscribing. Specialized interest in only certain newspaper content, or a particular day of the week, also is frequently cited by single copy buyers.

Table 1

Media Use of Subscribers and Non-Subscribers (Northeastern Market)

	Subscribers (n=372)	Non-Subscribers (n=100)
I. Frequency of Watching Early Local TV News*		
3 Days or less/week	47%	64%
4-7 Days	53%	36%
II. Number of Magazines Subscribed to*		
None	27%	46%
One or More	73%	54%
III. Cable Subscriber*		
No	34.9%	55.7%
Yes	65.1%	44.3%

*Differences significant at $p < .05$

Nature of the Data

The nature of the data used for this report varied widely, from single-page summaries of survey results to detailed computer print-outs of tabulations and cross-tabulations.

Very few market reports made use of or reported statistical tests. When probability samples are used, these tests can be quite useful in determining whether numerical differences between subscribers and non-subscribers are real—that is, within a certain range, these differences would be what we would find if we had the opportunity to talk to *all* the subscribers and *all* the non-subscribers in the given market—or whether these differences could have occurred merely by chance.

Questions were not always included in the various reports, although in some instances the questions could be inferred from the data. In general, how a question is asked affects the nature and distribution of responses, so their inclusion is always helpful in evaluating the data.

Comparisons across markets also were restricted by differences in measures used or questions asked. For instance, subscribers and non-subscribers were compared in a few markets on exposure to other media or frequency of use of other media. Our ability to compare these results from one market to another is limited, however, if one market uses the question "How many days in the last week did you watch network TV news?" and another asks "How many days of the week on average do you watch television news?" while another uses the question "How frequently do you watch television news?"

Table 2

Positive Newspaper Images in a Southern Market

Question: "People have many different feelings about newspapers. We'd like to know how you feel about the ——. Whether or not you read the —— regularly, is it your opinion that it is . . ."

	Total Adults	AM Subscribers	PM Subscribers	Non-Subscribers
Easy to Read	92%	96%	97%	86%
Useful	89%	95%	96%	80%
Accurate	75%	80%	79%	69%
Modern	74%	78%	82%	74%
Fair	74%	78%	80%	68%
Entertaining.....	74%	80%	79%	69%
Inexpensive	68%	68%	62%	70%
Prints Both Sides of Issue	60%	64%	68%	54%
Progressive	43%	45%	51%	38%
Conservative	36%	41%	32%	36%

(n = 520)

Guidelines

(1) While more than 200 reports were available to the NRC Mining Company, less than a fourth dealt directly with subscribers and non-subscribers. In these instances, groups are specifically identified as "subscribers" and "non-subscribers." In a few instances, non-subscribers were identified as non-subscribers to newspaper X. Where it was possible to eliminate those who were non-subscribers to newspaper X, but were subscribers to another daily newspaper, we did so. Where these distinctions were not made, we took at face value the term "non-subscribers" as being applied *to those who do not subscribe to a daily newspaper*. All market reports evaluated for this study were done for daily newspapers and covered the period 1977 to 1982.

(2) In most cases where statistical tests were not reported, a guideline of 10 percent was used in assessing meaningful differences between subscribers and non-subscribers. That is, a difference of roughly 10 percent between figures reported for subscribers and non-subscribers was taken as suggestive of a true difference. This standard was relaxed to about seven percent where sample sizes were at least a thousand. In general, however, where no statistical tests were reported, we tried to look for *patterns* in the differences, rather than relying primarily on absolute differences. Where caveats are necessary, these are pointed out to the reader at various places.

Demographics of Subscribers

Previous studies have tended to show non-subscribers to be less upscale than their subscriber counterparts. A study in Eugene, Oregon[12] showed non-subscribers in that city to be older, blue-collar workers, with lower annual family incomes and lower education. No differences were found on length of residency. In Mansfield, Ohio, the demographics of non-subscribers were essentially similar except that non-subscribers tended to be younger than subscribers.[11] This study was replicated five years later and the same results were found.[2] A study comparing *young* subscribers and non-subscribers found no differences in education, although among these under-35 adults, subscribers were more likely to be married and to have white collar jobs.[13]

A 1978 study by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau based on a national probability sample showed home delivery to be higher among the college educated, high income, those older, professionals and managers, and homeowners.

Grotta and Babbili[9] took subscribers and non-subscribers in a Southeastern market and further categorized both groups into hard-cores and marginals. They found the hard-core subscribers and non-subscribers to be more alike: both groups tended to be older, higher income, home-owners, and long-time residents of the area, whereas marginal subscribers and marginal non-subscribers (or 'potential subscribers') were younger, single, had lower income, and were newer residents.

Examination of various demographic variables in the proprietary research reports made available to the NRC Mining Company reveals:

Table 3

Demographic Profile of Subscribers, Non-Subscribers and Former Subscribers of A.M. Newspaper in Midwestern Market

	Subscribers	Former Subscribers	Non-Subscribers
Sex			
Male	50%	44%	46%
Female	50%	56%	54%
Age			
34 or less	24%	38%	41%
35-54	37%	40%	33%
55+	38%	21%	25%
Education			
High school or less	53%	65%	63%
Some college +	45%	34%	36%
Employment			
Employed	55%	64%	59%
Retired/ Unemployed/ Student/Housewife	45%	36%	41%
Household Size			
1-2	50%	50%	51%
3+	50%	50%	49%
Tenure			
Own	82%	67%	67%
Rent	18%	33%	33%
Residence			
Less than 10 years	16%	14%	19%
10+	84%	86%	81%
Income			
Less than $10,000	12%	9%	19%
$10-$20,000	21%	27%	28%
$20,000 +	47%	39%	33%
Marital Status			
Married	73%	71%	63%
Other	27%	29%	37%

- While males more often tended to be subscribers in the past, more markets today show no difference by sex
- Subscribers still tend to be older than non-subscribers
- Subscribers have higher incomes than non-subscribers
- Subscribers have higher education than non-subscribers
- More subscribers own their own homes
- More subscribers are white
- More subscribers are married
- More subscribers have white-collar jobs
- Subscribers tend to have resided in the community longer

These conclusions are based on 25 market reports which specifically evaluated subscribership and some of the demographic variables described above. Given that these conclusions are based only on markets reporting subscriber-demographic correlations, and are therefore not necessarily representative of newspaper markets in general, they may not apply to a particular market.

Lifestyle

Only a few studies have looked at lifestyle variables differentiating subscribers from non-subscribers. Roby[12] measured sociability characteristics and found subscribers to be more active in their communities. They belonged to more business and professional groups than non-subscribers, while non-subscribers belonged to more social and fraternal groups. This is not surprising considering that the demographics of subscribers in this community showed them to be white-collar workers with higher incomes.

The 1970 Mansfield, Ohio study[11] found non-subscribers to be less community-oriented, more mobile, and slightly less socially involved. Subscribers here were found to be more involved in a wide range of leisure activities than non-subscribers.

Schweitzer[13] looked at young adult subscribers and non-subscribers on such variables as lifestyle, identification with the geographic area, ways of spending leisure time, mobility and identification of public officials. He found no significant differences between the two groups.

Unfortunately, none of the market reports available to the NRC Mining Company utilized any of these variables.

Use of Other Media

Only one study was found which looked at other media used by subscribers and non-subscribers. Schweitzer[15] found young non-subscribers (under age 35 to be significantly more likely than their subscribing counterparts to report television as a primary source of information. But non-subscribers watched less national TV news than subscribers, while no differences were found between the two groups in frequency of viewing local TV news.

New data on other media use by subscribers and non-subscribers were available from five markets across the country. Since the questions asked varied from one market to another, the results will be presented separately.

In a Midwestern market, the only difference between subscribers and non-subscribers (not surprisingly) was that more subscribers were apt to read a newspaper every day than non-subscribers. While both groups were similar in their frequency of television and radio use, slightly more subscribers read magazines every day.

In this market, respondents also were asked which medium was their first, second, third or fourth choice as a news source. The data showed more non-subscribers selecting television as their first choice than subscribers. More subscribers selected newspapers as their first choice. More non-subscribers also were partial to radio as a first choice than subscribers.

In a Northeastern market, subscribers and non-subscribers were compared on their frequency of exposure to both local and network television news, general magazine and newsmagazine subscriptions, and general radio and TV exposure. Subscribers did not differ from non-subscribers in their frequency of television and radio use, nor did they differ in their exposure to network news and number of newsmagazine subscriptions.

However, as Table 1 shows, significant differences were found in the frequency of watching early local TV news, total number of magazines subscribed to, and cable subscriptions, with more subscribers watching early local TV news more often, subscribing to one or more magazines, and subscribing to cable.

In a Southern market, four times as many subscribers as non-subscribers cited the newspaper as the source they used most often for local news (48 percent to 12 percent). On the other hand, 60 percent of non-subscribers cited television as their primary local news source compared to 36 percent of subscribers. Twice as many non-subscribers as subscribers also mentioned radio as the most often used source for local news (24 percent to 12 percent).

Subscribers and non-subscribers in a Southeastern market were compared on their exposure to a local weekly newspaper. Twenty-five percent of subscribers said they had read or looked at a weekly newspaper in the last seven days as compared to only 16 percent of non-subscribers.

In a Canadian market, more subscribers were found to use other print media than non-subscribers. Fourteen percent of subscribers said they received another daily newspaper compared to 10 percent of non-subscribers to the local daily. Similarly, one in four subscribers received a weekly newspaper compared to only 15 percent of non-subscribers.

What do these findings suggest about the media use of subscribers and non-subscribers? While different questions were asked in these five markets, some patterns appear. First, subscribers seem to be more print-oriented than non-subscribers:

(1) They read newspapers more often

(2) They subscribe to more magazines

(3) They are more likely to read another daily newspaper or a weekly newspaper

The second discernible pattern seems to be that while subscribers do not differ from non-subscribers in their broadcast media exposure, the difference lies in their *news* exposure. Subscribers tend more often to choose newspapers as a primary news source, especially for local news. They also tend to watch more local television news than non-subscribers. This is not necessarily contradictory to the other findings that non-subscribers were more likely to cite television or radio as their primary news source than newspapers. While non-subscribers generally attend to the broadcast media more heavily than subscribers, at the same time subscribers attend to news, especially local news, more heavily than non-subscribers.

Content Preferences

Grotta and Babbili[3] segmented subscribers and non-subscribers into hard-cores and marginals. They found that marginal subscribers and non-subscribers exhibited similar higher interest levels for "soft news" items (tips on how to save money, things to do and places to go, food and recipes, etc.). Hard-core non-subscribers were less interested than the other three

segments in all but four types of content: local news, national and world news, local sports news, and national sports news.

New data on differences in content preferences among subscribers and non-subscribers came primarily from four markets, each of which classified content in a slightly different way.

In one market, differences between subscribers and non-subscribers were assessed in terms of interest in local, national and international news. Across all three categories, subscribers showed significantly greater interest than non-subscribers.

In another market, content was categorized according to major sections of the newspaper. Again, a greater number of subscribers regularly read most of the secctions than did non-subscribers, with the exception of comics, want ads, TV schedules, and movies/amusement. It is interesting that, with the exception of the comics section (which generally receives high readership levels across most groups), very specific utilitarian information is provided by the other three sections, and it is in this area that non-subscribers do not differ from subscribers.

And in another market, subscribers' interest in 23 topics was compared with non-subscribers'. Interest across topics was found to be 24 percent higher on average for subscribers than for non-subscribers. Non-subscribers were especially less interested in expert opinions, politics, social news, and certain types of news for homeowners.

Evaluations of Media Performance

In a comparison of subscribers' and non-subscribers' feelings toward newspapers, the data from a Southern market (Table 2) show that on almost all the measures at least 10 percent fewer non-subscribers than subscribers rated newspapers positively. More subscribers to either morning or evening newspapers rated the newspaper higher than non-subscribers on ease of reading, usefulness, accuracy, fairness, balance, entertainment value and progressiveness.

How do newspapers as a news medium rate in comparison to other media? In a Midwestern market, more subscribers rated newspapers as "entertaining," "essential," as well as "worth the time spent" than non-subscribers. Both groups did not differ in rating newspapers as "useful" and "reliable."

In their rating of television and radio, subscribers and non-subscribers did not differ much in rating both media as "entertaining" and "reliable;" and as many in both groups rated television as "essential." However, on this measure, more non-subscribers rated radio as "essential" and "worth the time spent." Not much difference was found between subscribers and non-subscribers in their rating of magazines.

In a Northeastern market, more than 480 respondents were asked to evaluate the quality of newspaper, television, radio and newsmagazine coverage of news generally. On the last three media, subscribers did not differ from non-subscribers. However, significantly more subscribers (two-thirds) said newspaper news coverage was "good," compared to 56 percent of non-subscribers.

In summary, we might conclude that the use of the broadcast media appears to be a factor in the rating of newspapers. Where subscribers rate newspapers higher than radio, TV or magazines as a news medium, newspapers are either rated equally with other media or rated lower in their news coverage by non-subscribers.

Motives for Subscribing

Why do people subscribe to a newspaper? McCombs, Mullins and Weaver[9] found that the three most frequent reasons all had to do with keeping up with what's going on: 71 percent said they wanted to keep up with national and international news; 70 percent said they wanted to keep up with local happenings, and 60 percent mentioned keeping up with state news. Respondents also were asked what they would miss most if they could not get the newspaper. Fifty percent of the respondents mentioned 'the news.'

Stamm, Jackson and Bowen[11] looked at newcomers to the community and found that the more severe the dislocation, it was more likely that the new resident would rely on the newspaper for information on the community, work, home neighborhood and leisure.

Do subscribers and non-subscribers differ in their motives for reading the newspaper? Results from a Far Western market suggest that while subscribers do not differ from non-subscribers in reading the newspaper because it's "fun to read," they differ in their motivation "to keep up," "to understand what's going on," to use the medium in daily living and "to relax." Subscribers were more likely to cite these motives for reading the newspaper than non-subscribers.

Reasons for Stopping

Why do people stop their subscriptions? McCombs, *et. al.*,[5] found delivery problems to be the most frequently mentioned reason (cited by 22 percent, followed by 'went on vacation,' (17 percent) and 'moved' (12 percent).

Nine studies in seven different markets show fairly similar patterns. The major reason appears to be delivery problems. In two markets, the second most frequently mentioned reason for stopping a subscription was "not enough time to read." In three other markets, the second most frequently cited reason was economic: subscribing was said to be too expensive. In one West Coast market, content of the newspaper and lack of time were most frequently mentioned, with delivery problems a close second.

When these results were analyzed by age and income, younger people and women were more likely to cite "no time to read" than older people and males. Respondents 35 and older were more likely to mention delivery problems, while no differences were found between men and women on this item. Men as well as older respondents were more likely to say they no longer subscribed because of the newspaper's content.

An in-depth, qualitative study of 50 recent stops in a Southern market showed that the newspaper itself remained a viable product. That is, about one half said they would "feel lost without the _____" or "The _____ is very important" to them. Other measurements relating to content elicited favorable responses. However, poor service generally cancelled out the favorable ratings. In that market, stops ranged from very recent to long-term former subscribers (four out of 10 had subscribed to the newspaper for 10 years or longer), refuting the notion, at least in this instance, that most stops might come from those with shorter associations with the newspaper.

Table 3 profiles former subscribers along with current subscribers and non-subscribers to a morning newspaper in a Midwestern market. Disregarding the slight differences between the morning and afternoon newspapers, former subscribers appear to be more similar to non-subscribers in some respects than to subscribers. Like non-subscribers, former subscribers tend to be female, younger, have less education, lower income, and are less likely to own a home. The figures show that former subscribers appear to be slightly more upscale than non-subscribers which may suggest why they were likely candidates for newspaper subscribing in the first place.

However, their ties to the newspaper are "weaker," so to speak, given the fact that they tend to have slightly less education and income than subscribers, and tend to rent rather than own a home.

Political Interest

The results from two markets are quite similar and may be summarized simply: subscribers tend to exhibit higher political interest, to be better informed, and to be more active participants in the political system.

As Table 4 shows, in both markets subscribers were more likely to be registered voters and, in the Southeastern market, were more likely to have voted in the past presidential election. In the Northeastern market, subscribers were more likely to be interested in the local mayoral race, to know the correct number of candidates running for mayor (four), and to correctly identify each candidate.

When respondents were asked about their primary source of news on the mayoral race, 56 percent of subscribers mentioned newspapers compared to only 29 percent of non-subscribers. On the other

Table 4

Political Interest Among Subscribers and Non-Subscribers

	Subscribers	Non-Subscribers
I. How much do you think your opinion can count in influencing the activities and policies of *local* government? Would you say . . .		
"Some" to "A lot"	29%	23%
"Little" to "Not at all"	71%	75%
Don't Know	--	2%
Total	100%	100%
N =	(92)	(56)
II. Are you a registered voter?		
Registered voter	86%	52%
Not registered voter	14%	48%
Total	100%	100%
N =	(92)	(56)
III. Did you vote in the 1976 Presidential election?		
Voted	74%	41%
Did not vote	12%	11%
Not registered voter	14%	48%
Total	100%	100%
N =	(92)	(56)
IV. Interest in local election*		
High	56%	37%
Low	44%	63%
Total	100%	100%
N =	(188)	(74)
V. Know correct number of candidates running for mayor*		
Did know	43%	32%
Didn't know	60%	68%
Total	103%	100%
N =	(370)	(108)

*Statistically significant at p .05. Data for sections I-III from Southeastern market; for sections IV and V from Northeastern market.

hand, about two-thirds of non-subscribers (68 percent) mentioned television compared to 38 percent of subscribers who selected this medium.

In the Southeastern market, slightly more subscribers indicated that their "opinions could count in influencing activities and policies of local government."

A Case Study—The News Norm

Does newspaper subscribing result in part from a sense of civic duty to keep informed?

This duty to be informed can be measured by a scale consisting of four statements. Pioneer work on this scale by McCombs and Poindexter[9] indicated that it was a fairly good predictor of newspaper readership.

The four statements comprising this news norm scale are:

1. It is important to be informed about news and current events
2. So many other people follow the news and keep informed about it that it doesn't matter much whether I do
3. A good deal of news about current events isn't important enough to keep informed about
4. We all have a duty to keep ourselves informed about news and current events

Analysis indicates that subscribers are more likely to hold a strong belief in the duty to be informed than non-subscribers, and are more likely to read the newspaper to understand and keep up with the latest events.

Home and School Influences

A 1977 study by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau of a representative sample of over 3,000 adults found childhood exposure to be related to subscribing. Among those who recalled having a newspaper in their homes as a child, two-thirds were current subscribers compared with about half of those who did not have a newspaper at home in their childhood.

Another NAB national survey similarly found that having a newspaper at home as a child and using a newspaper in the classroom are positively related to newspaper subscribing (Table 5). The effects were found to be greater among non-whites than among whites.

Among non-whites, more subscribers were found among those who had the newspaper at home as a child than among those who had not. There were also more subscribers among those who had a newspaper in the classroom than among those who had not.

The effect of having a newspaper at home as well as in the classroom also appears to be cumulative for this group: That is, the greatest number of subscribers were found among those who experienced both situations, while the least number of subscribers were found among those who had neither.

Among whites, on the other hand, having a newspaper in class made a difference on newspaper subscribing only if there was no newspaper exposure at home. If they had a newspaper at home as a child, over two-thirds of whites in the sample were subscribers, regardless of whether they had had a newspaper in class or not. If they had not had a newspaper at home, over three-fifths were subscribers if they had a newspaper in class whereas only 55 percent were subscribers if they did not have a newspaper in class. Thus with whites, newspapers in the classroom appears to have an impact on subscribing only when the respondent did not have the newspaper at home as a child.

Single Copy Buying

Reports from seven separate markets and two national surveys show that the single copy buyer:

- is younger (34 and under)
- is male
- has low income
- lives in a multiple dwelling unit
- belongs to a small household (1 or 2 persons).

Table 5

Effect of Newspaper Subscribing
(Percent who are Newspaper Subscribers)

	Non-whites	Whites
Looked at newspaper at home as child		
Had newspaper in class	61%	68%
Didn't have newspaper in class	43%	70%
Did not have newspaper at home		
Had newspaper in class	45%	61%
Didn't have newspaper in class	27%	55%

On other variables, the results appear to vary by market. Of four surveys that took race into account, two found single copy buyers to be more often non-white than white whereas the opposite was found in the other two markets.

In one market, the predominant single copy purchasers tended to have a white collar occupation. In two markets where education was taken into account, single copy buyers in one tended to have low education (high school or less) whereas the opposite was found in the second market.

Single copy purchasers were questioned in seven markets about why they preferred to obtain their newspaper this way. In four markets, the predominant reason given was that the respondent did not have time to read the entire newspaper and was only interested in specific sections. Poor delivery service ranked first in the other three markets.

When single copy buyers were categorized into regular and irregular buyers in two markets, regular or loyal purchasers tended to cite "delivery problems" slightly more often whereas irregular buyers were more likely to cite "no time to read" or mentioned that they were only interested in looking at specific sections.

In the first market, interviews with single copy buyers showed they also tended to purchase a copy for specific sections of the newspaper (stocks, sports, features) or the occurrence of late-breaking news. Similarly, getting "a quick summary of the news" was the most frequently cited reasons by single copy buyers in a Midwestern market.

Additional data in three cities from the Newspaper Advertising Bureau study showed that two out of five single copy buyers cited dissatisfaction with home delivery service while one in four mentioned infrequent reading (not home regularly, don't want to read the newspaper everyday). In these three markets, a large proportion of single copy buyers (three of four) previously had home delivery. Among those with previous home delivery, dissatisfaction with service was mentioned by more than twice as many as those who cited infrequent reading (54 percent to 23 percent).

A research report on single copy buying by a major Northern metropolitan market from which some of these results were drawn concluded appropriately:

> "Single copy purchasing should not be regarded as the negative side of the coin from home delivery. While there is impetus on the part of some people to reject home delivery because of perceived problems with service, the basic drive to buy single copies comes from a desire to read *only on selected days* or under specific conditions that do not exist every day."

Summing Up

The results show that we have improved what we know about subscribers with the help of these various market reports. However, much more needs to be done.

There is a pattern in the data that bears further investigation. A strong interest in news and a desire to keep informed about what's going on appears to underlie subscribing. Several results suggest this.

First, subscribers clearly differ from non-subscribers in their greater use of newspapers and magazines, their greater exposure to broadcast news, especially local news, and greater interest in local, national and international news. They do not differ from non-subscribers in their general use of television or radio. Thus, it appears the news rather than the entertainment function of newspapers more clearly differentiates subscribers from non-subscribers.

Second, subscribers exhibit higher levels of political interest, knowledge and activity than non-subscribers and these activities are closely tied to keeping up with the news.

It is evident from the market data we evaluated that most newspapers still rely on the old standby—demographics—to differentiate or describe their audiences. One cannot dispute the utility of demographics, but their explanatory uses are limited. Why do some people subscribe and others don't? What brings an individual to subscribe rather than buy single copies? Some answers have been suggested by the findings, but demographics alone will not help us understand subscribing behavior.

A few markets have made important steps by looking at (a) why people cancel subscriptions; (b) single-copy buying; (c) other media use of subscribers and non-subscribers; and (d) content preferences. These variables need to be evaluated more systematically by other markets.

There is a need for more trend data. Only two or three markets have consistently looked at similar variables over time. Certainly a two-year comparison is better than data at one time point, and a comparison over five time points is better than one with two time points. The important thing is that significant patterns may emerge with data collected over several points in time.

Characteristics of the market and the newspaper also need to be more systematically analyzed. What is

the economic picture of the community, the nature of its workforce, commuting patterns, availability of other mdia? How about the newspaper itself? What type of competitive situation is it in?

Finally, we need to be able to say something about the contribution of key variables to subscribing, relative to other variables. That is, by using more sophisticated tools, such as multiple regression, we may be able to account for "how much" a given factor or variable contributes toward explaining newspaper subscribing. □

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ANPA NEWS RESEARCH REPORT

A REPORT FOR EDITORS FROM THE ANPA NEWS RESEARCH CENTER No. 40 December 30, 1983

ROUTE TO
Editorial _____
Promotion _____
Circulation _____
Advertising _____
Production _____
Personnel _____
Other _____

"The Effects of Bad News and Good News On Newspaper and Community Images"

By Jack B. Haskins

HIGHLIGHTS: The comparative effects of five versions of a newspaper differing in the amount of good news and bad news were tested in a laboratory experiment with 220 college students ages 18 to 34. The bad news/good news balance had highly significant effects on 15 of the 16 newspaper image characteristics and 21 of the 22 community image characteristics measured in this study.

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Maxwell E. McCombs, Director, ANPA News Research Center

The Effects of Bad News and Good News on Newspaper and Community Images

By Jack B. Haskins

Dr. Haskins is a professor of journalism in the College of Communications at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. *He gratefully acknowledges the many hours of technical assistance provided by Professor M. Mark Miller and doctoral students William Dockery, Sara Stone, Paul Wright, Martha Rogers, Dean Hitt, Emily Edwards, David Williamson, Robert Bohle and Lewis Walker. This study was funded by the ANPA Research Center.*

Does an excessive amount of bad news have a negative effect on the reader's image of the newspaper carrying it? Or on the reader's image of the community from which the newspaper originates? This experiment was aimed at answering these questions.

Since anyone or anything associated with an unpleasant stimulus often comes to be perceived more negatively, it seems likely that bad news may tarnish the reader's attitude toward and image of the carrying newspaper. In light of the relatively low credibility and declining market penetration of U.S. newspapers, particularly among young adults, it seems important to investigate the possible role of excessive bad news in this regard.

It's also reasonable that the local newspaper's content may affect a reader's attitude toward and image of the community, especially a relatively unfamiliar community. The mobility of the U.S. population makes this a problem to be reckoned with.

Summary of Results

While experiments are, in one sense, highly artificial, at the same time they also provide highly rigorous evidence of effects. This experiment, sponsored by the ANPA News Research Center, was designed to test hypotheses that the relative amounts of bad news and good news in a newspaper have corresponding effects on perceptions of the community of origin and the carrying newspaper.

• The hypotheses were overwhelmingly verified. The bad/good news balance had highly significant corresponding effects on 21 of 22 community image characteristics and on 15 of 16 newspaper characteristics. In short, bad news has negative effects and good news has positive effects on the subjects' perceptions of the community-of-origin and of the carrying newspaper.

• Bad news also created negative perceptions of the newspaper on both news-related characteristics (e.g., constructive approach, good influence on community, bias, realistic balance, etc.) and general characteristics (e.g., trustworthy advertising, desirability of subscribing, editorial staff competence, etc.)

• Bad news created a negative image of the community not only on characteristics directly related to the news topics (e.g., safety, crime and violence, law enforcement, etc.), but also on general characteristics unrelated to news content (e.g., standard of living, neighborhood attractiveness, clean environment, etc.). Good news had corresponding positive effects on both news-related and unrelated characteristics.

• Most ratings tended to be lowest for the "very bad news" issue, after which the ratings either declined slightly or remained about the same for the "very good news" issue.

Experimental Newspapers

One of the most important and painstaking parts of the study was the creation of five newspaper issues, varying *only* in the degree of negative-positive news content while holding all other newspaper and community variables constant. Clearly, the issues had to be as identical as possible on such elements as layout, advertising content, subject-matter of the news stories, news origin (local, domestic, foreign) and, to the extent possible, in the specific news events presented. Since no existing "real" newspaper could fulfill these requirements, it was necessary to create five fictitious, but realistic, *experimental* issues.

Within the budgetary limits, it was decided to create and print four-page tabloid-size issues (pages 1, 2, 15 and 16 from an ostensible 16-page small-community newspaper). From the presumably unfamiliar and non-newsy Midwest, the colorless community of "Compton, Nebraska, just an average small Midwestern town," was created out of thin air.

Other criteria specified and fulfilled for the five issues were as follows. Layout was identical in terms of the logotype, number and size of stories and headlines, pictorial matter, placement, typeface and all other visually apparent makeup and layout variables. In each issue, the 35 percent of space devoted to advertising consisted of identical ads in identical locations. A realistic balance of news subject-matter, identical in all issues, must be presented in the 30 stories/headlines contained in each issue. To this end, recent content analysis of U.S. newspapers by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau (1978) were used as the criterion in arriving at the approximate proportions of news by *story origin* and *subject-matter*, the proportions identical in all five issues.

Table 1

Mean Ratings of Five Experimental Issues*

	Mean rating	n
(T1) "Extremely bad news" issue	-2.27	31
(T2) "Bad news" issue	-1.69	60
(T3) "Neutral" issue	+0.15	49
(T4) "Good news" issue	+1.37	54
(T5) "Extremely good news" issue	+2.06	26
		220

*Rated on a 7-step scale ranging from minus 3 ("the worst possible news") to plus 3 ("the best possible news").

The five issues varied systematically in the overall negative-positive dimension from "Extremely bad news" (Treatment 1), to "Bad news" (Treatment 2), to "Neutral news" (Treatment 3), to "Good news" (Treatment 4) to "Extremely good news" (Treatment 5), as shown in Table. 1.

The experimental treatments and a questionnaire were administered to 220 students enrolled in two sections of a freshman course at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville:

- 94 percent were in the 18-24 age group and all were under 35
- 95 percent were single
- 38 percent worked for pay, either part-time or full-time
- 11 percent were household heads
- 56 percent were female, 44 percent male
- 87 percent claimed either moderate or high interest in news (13 percent claimed no interest or a slight interest)

Table 2

Composite Newspaper and Community Images*

News Treatment	Newspaper Image[1]	Community Image[2]
"Very bad news"	2.12	2.31
"Bad news"	2.51	2.78
"Neutral news"	2.93	3.19
"Good news"	3.16	3.38
"Very good news"	3.03	3.38

[1]Mean score across 16 characteristics
[2]Mean score across 22 characteristics
*Means from a 1-5 scale with 1 = "one of the worst communities" and 5 = "one of the best communities."

- 58 percent claimed religion was very important or "the most important thing" in their lives (20 percent said most important, 38 percent very important, 28 percent fairly important, 14 percent not very important).

The distribution of students across the five experimental treatments was completely random, so that the groups of respondents receiving each version of the newspaper were equivalent in terms of all demographic and personality variables.

This extremely homogeneous group of students is, of course, not representative of the adult population or of newspaper readers in general. However, as is the case with most other experimental studies using students, it is assumed that the *relative effects* of the experimental treatments are projectable to the larger

Table 3

Effects of Bad and Good News on Perceptions of the Newspaper

(Note: Listed in rank order of magnitude of the effects. F-value reflects significance of the difference in the five treatments.)

Newspaper Characteristic	F-value
Good influence on the community (A)	44
Suitable for children to read (B)	43
Emphasizes a constructive and positive view of events (A)	43
Genuine concern for community well-being (C)	34
Provides a feeling of satisfaction (C)	18
Friendliness to the reader (C)	16
Realistic balance of both good and bad happenings (A)	16
Kind of newspaper you would like to subscribe to (C)	13
Effectively serves as a "community watchdog" (B)	6
Trustworthy news reports (B)	6
Concentrates on covering only important events (B)	4
Overall competence of reporters and editors (D)	4
Unbiased coverage of the news (B)	3
Trustworthy advertising (D)	3
Lively and interesting source of information (C)	3
Attractiveness of appearance (D)	NS
Composite image, all 16 newspaper characteristics	32

A,B,C,D represent relationship between characteristic and news content

A = directly related to news negative-positive dimension
B = objective assessment of newspaper by subject in "expert" role
C = subjective response to newspaper in "feeling" role
D = nonvariable characteristic of newspaper issues (same in all issues)

population. In addition, evidence on newspaper *effects* is important for understanding this young and prosperous segment of the population who are of great importance to the newspaper industry.

Effects on Newspaper Image

The "Very bad news" issue tended to produce the lowest newspaper image ratings. The ratings then improved steadily, with the "Bad," "Neutral" and "Good" issues. But with the "Very good news" issue, there tended to be a decline in ratings, which might be labeled the "too good to be true" effect. Table 2 shows the composite image for all newspaper traits combined for each of the five news treatments.

Table 3 shows all 16 newspaper image characteristics in rank order of the magnitude of effects, as indicated by the size of the "F" value. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) "F" value directly reflects the magnitude of effects and the differences created by the bad/good news variation. Analysis of variance is a statistical technique to determine if the differences among the newspaper versions are due to chance (statistically non-significant) or so large that the differences are most likely not due to chance (statistically significant).

In Table 3 the strongest effects were created on the newspaper characteristics "Good influence on the community," "Suitable for children to read," "Emphasizes a constructive and positive view of events," and "Genuine concern for community well-being." Fifteen of the 16 newspaper characteristics were significantly affected. The only one not affected was "Attractiveness of appearance."

The newspaper image characteristics may be classified into four subjective categories—those directly related to the negative-positive dimension of news (A, three characteristics), objective assessment of the newspaper (B, five characteristics), subjective response to the newspaper (C, five characteristics), and nonvariable characteristics of the newspaper (D, three characteristics).

The greatest effects were created on the directly-related characteristics, the smallest on the nonvariable characteristics (editorial competence, trustworthy advertising, attractive appearance). Subjective-response effects were generally larger than objective-assessment effects. The traits in Table 3 were identified as A, B, C and D to document those conclusions.

Table 4 shows the 16 newspaper characteristics in the order seen by the respondents in their questionnaires, along with the mean ratings for each of the five newspaper issues.

Effects of Demographic and Personality Variables

It was hypothesized that the effects of the different newspaper issues on community image and newspaper image would either be enhanced or diminished by various demographic and personality characteris-

Table 4

Newspaper Image Mean Values by Newspaper Treatments

"Now what is your rating of this newspaper in terms of . . ."	Newspaper Issue/Treatment						
	All combined	Very bad	Bad	Neutral	Good	Very good	F-value
Attractiveness/appearance?	2.85	2.88	2.83	2.80	2.89	2.92	0.2*
Unbiased coverage of events?	2.83	2.44	2.78	2.96	2.89	3.08	3.2
Friendliness to the reader?	3.11	2.50	2.86	3.29	3.45	3.38	15.9
Realistic balance of both good and bad happenings?	2.37	1.50	2.10	2.76	2.64	2.81	15.5
Overall competence of editors and reporters?	2.77	2.50	2.67	2.90	2.95	2.69	3.6
Provides a feeling of satisfaction?	2.50	1.81	2.16	2.57	2.93	3.12	17.5
Good influence on the community?	2.79	1.66	2.30	3.18	3.41	3.31	43.6
Trustworthy advertising?	3.10	2.91	2.97	3.12	3.23	3.31	2.9
Lively and exciting source of information?	2.39	2.25	2.29	2.20	2.64	2.62	2.9
Suitable for children to read?	2.82	1.53	2.37	3.16	3.59	3.23	43.4
Genuine concern for community well-being?	3.02	2.00	2.56	3.39	3.57	3.54	33.6
Concentrates on covering only important events?	2.65	2.19	2.67	2.90	2.59	2.81	4.4
Trustworthy news reports?	2.90	2.44	2.81	3.12	3.02	3.00	5.6
Emphasizes constructive and positive view of events?	2.71	1.59	2.19	3.00	3.43	3.23	42.6
Effectively serves as a community watchdog?	2.86	2.34	2.73	3.08	3.11	2.88	6.4
The kind of newspaper you would like to subscribe to?	2.12	1.38	1.83	2.27	2.63	2.42	13.0

*Not significant. All other F-values highly significant.

tics, as well as by "general news interest" and "religiosity."

To test these hypotheses, two-way analyses of variance were conducted using each of those variables separately.

The results showed, in summary, that *none* of the demographic intervening variables had a significant effect. That is, the news treatment effects were the same regardless of *class level* (freshman vs. others), *sex* (male vs. female), *work status* (job vs. no job), *kind of residence* (owners vs. renters), *general news interest* (slight vs. moderate vs. high) or *importance of religion* (most important, very important, fairly important or not important).

Additionally, none of the personality variables had a significant effect. The treatment effects were the same regardless of *extraversion* (high vs. moderate vs. low), *emotional stability* (high vs. moderate vs. low), and *tough-mindedness* (high vs. moderate vs. low).

It is conceivable that different results might be obtained in a more heterogeneous group. The present experimental group was extremely homogeneous in terms of age, socio-economic status and religious affiliation.

Effects on Community Image

For the 22 community image traits, the general pattern was for the "Very bad news" issue to produce the lowest ratings, with gradually and steadily improving ratings for the "Bad," "Neutral" and "Good" issues, and with little or no improvement for the "Very good" issue. Table 2 shows the composite image for all characteristics combined, expressing this common pattern.

Table 5 shows all 22 community image characteristics in rank order of the magnitude of effects. Also shown is the ANOVA (analysis of variance) "F" value which reflects directly the magnitude of effects and the differences created by the bad/good news variation. Analysis of variance is a statistical technique to determine if the differences among issues are due to chance (non-significant) or so large that differences are not due to chance (significant).

The strongest effects were created on "Good place to raise children," "Traffic safety," "Overall rating of whole community," "Health and happiness" and "Freedom from crime and violence." However, 21 of the 22 community characteristics were strongly affected beyond the .01 probability level—i.e., highly significant. The only community characteristic not significantly affected was "Recreation and leisure activities."

Some of the community characteristics were specifically related to the bad news content (A), some were generally related to content (B), and some were considered unrelated to content (C). These relationships are indicated in Table 5.

The strongest effects were created, as expected, on characteristics specifically related to the news (Mean F = 29.5); the weakest effects were achieved on news-unrelated characteristics (Mean F = 11.3). The most significant finding, however, was that *bad news created significant negative effects even on community characteristics unrelated to the content of the news.* That is, the tenor of the news had a generalized carryover or "negative halo" effect on almost every aspect of community image—health and happiness, standard of living, attractiveness of neighborhoods, clean air and environment, cost of living, progressiveness, and stores and shopping facilities.

Table 6 shows the 22 community characteristics in the order seen by the respondents, along with the mean ratings of each of the five newspaper issues.

Table 5

Effects of Bad and Good News on Perceptions of the Community

(Note: Listed in rank order of magnitude of the effects. F-value reflects significance of the difference in the five treatments.)

Community Characteristic	F-value
Good place to raise children (B)*	39
Traffic safety (A)	36
Overall rating of whole community (B)	34
Health and happiness (C)	33
Freedom from crime and violence (A)	33
Morality and decency (B)	30
Friendly peaceable neighbors (B)	30
Law enforcement (B)	29
Property safety (A)	27
Good place to live (B)	23
Personal safety to walk streets at night (A)	22
General standard of living (C)	17
Quality of local government (B)	16
Attractive neighborhoods (C)	13
Honest public officials (B)	13
Clean air and environment (C)	11
Employment and prosperity (B)	10
Lack of drug and alcohol problems (B)	10
Reasonable cost of living (C)	8
Progressiveness (C)	4
Stores and shopping facilities (C)	3
Recreation and liesure activities (C)	1.7NS
Composite image, all 22 characteristics	57

*A,B,C represent relationship between characteristic and news content. A = specifically related; B = generally related; C = unrelated.

Discussion

While it is essential for the public to know about some bad news for self-protection and decision making, much of it is irrelevant and unimportant. Journalists may assume that most bad news sells newspapers and attracts audiences. But they may tend to overestimate public interest in bad news.

Another reason for the preponderance of bad news is the traditional system of news beats, which are largely concentrated in community trouble centers—the law enforcement agencies, fire stations, hospitals and the courts. Larger news organizations dispatch special correspondents to cover major disasters, rebellions, wars and latent trouble spots.

Why should journalists be concerned about the emphasis on bad news?

This study shows that a community newspaper emphasizing bad news is perceived by its readers as less desirable to subscribe to, less trustworthy, less important, more biased, less satisfying, less professional and even less effective as a watchdog. It also is seen as a malevolent influence on the community, less suitable for children, less constructive, lacking genuine concern for the community, less lively, less friendly to the reader, less balanced. Even the advertising is deemed less trustworthy.

Due to budget limitations, this study was conducted on young college adults, a market segment of great importance to the newspaper industry, rather than on the general public. These findings should be supplemented by a similar study conducted on a more representative cross-section of newspaper reading adults from the general community.

This study employed only one issue of a fictitious newspaper from a fictitious community unfamiliar to the subject. A more generalizable experiment would use real newspapers over a period of time in real communities by residents of those communities. This could only be done by a controlled field experiment conducted in several communities simultaneously, with systematic variation of the bad and good news content of those newspapers over time. It would require the cooperation of editors in those communities and considerable time and research funds—difficult but possible. □

Table 6

Community Image Mean Values by Newspaper Treatments

"Compared with other cities you have known, how would you rate Compton . . ."	Newspaper Issue/Treatment						
	All combined	Very bad	Bad	Neutral	Good	Very good	F-value
As a good place to live?	2.90	2.03	2.68	2.96	3.33	3.38	23.3
On law enforcement?	2.89	2.06	2.62	3.22	3.24	3.12	28.7
Stores and shopping facilities?	2.91	3.00	2.75	2.92	3.13	2.73	22.9
Clean air and environment?	3.53	2.90	3.42	3.67	3.81	3.69	10.0
Friendly peaceable neighbors?	3.24	2.29	2.90	3.45	3.80	3.58	29.6
Traffic safety?	2.94	1.97	2.60	3.14	3.44	3.46	35.6
Employment and prosperity?	2.91	2.55	2.63	2.83	3.19	3.54	11.1
Personal safety to walk streets at night?	2.94	1.94	2.57	3.39	3.37	3.27	22.3
Quality of local government?	2.91	2.26	2.68	3.14	3.17	3.27	15.9
Morality and decency?	3.24	2.16	2.95	3.51	3.72	3.69	30.1
Recreation and leisure activities?	2.80	2.71	2.63	2.86	2.89	3.04	1.7*
Freedom from crime and violence?	2.89	1.68	2.62	3.29	3.35	3.27	33.1
Attractive neighborhoods?	3.21	2.58	2.95	3.33	3.54	3.65	13.3
Good place to raise children?	3.01	1.74	2.63	3.31	3.61	3.62	38.7
Honest public officials?	3.01	2.35	2.85	3.16	3.31	3.23	12.8
Reasonable cost of living?	3.11	2.77	2.93	3.14	3.35	3.38	7.5
Property safety?	3.05	2.06	2.85	3.35	3.43	3.38	27.1
Progressiveness?	2.71	2.71	2.45	2.67	2.80	3.19	3.8
Lack of drug and alcohol problems?	3.02	2.52	2.78	3.18	3.26	3.38	9.9
General standard of living?	3.09	2.52	2.90	3.14	3.35	3.54	16.5
Health and happiness?	3.19	2.19	2.94	3.39	3.68	3.65	33.4
Overall rating whole community?	3.03	2.09	2.75	3.22	3.48	3.54	34.3

*Not significant. All other F-values highly significant.

Making It Easy To Use 1980 Census Reports

The Commerce Department's Census Bureau is trying to make it easier to use its 250,000 pages of statistics from the 1980 census by publishing a series of "Census '80 Product Primers." Designed for instructional use, these Product Primers include tips on how to use census publications, exercises and technical notes.

Primer No. 1 deals with the first series of final 1980 state population reports entitled "Number of Inhabitants." The four-page primer gives tips on how to use the census books and even includes exercises and sample charts.

Product Primer 2 describes "General Housing Characteristics," HC80-1-A, the first in a series of state reports that measure our nation's housing stock. The reports contain data for counties, metropolitan areas, urban and rural areas, places of 1,000 or more population, and Indian reservations. The Primer introduces several housing concepts and shows how to use HC80-1-A to investigate housing conditions.

"Block Statistics," PHC80-1, is the subject of *Product Primer 3*. "Block Statistics" reports, available only in microfiche form, contain both population and housing information for blocks in cities, towns and certain other areas. The Primer describes the content of the report and explains the block concept. Exercises illustrate the use of "Block Statistics" in survey sampling, and further the user's understanding of how the Census Bureau protects the confidentiality of individuals by "suppressing" certain data items.

Many of the long-awaited sample data items appeared in a series of state reports entitled *Advance Estimates of Social, Economic, and Housing Characteristics*, PHC80-S2. *Product Primer 4* reviews the information contained in *Advance Estimates* including family composition, marital status, age, employment, income, housing facilities, year built, size of units and housing costs. The Primer uses a quiz to test your knowledge of population and housing trends and shows how to use the reports to construct an industry employment profile to analyze the local or state economy.

Primer 5 introduces "General Population Characteristics," PC80-1-B. Age, sex, marital status, Spanish origin and household relationship are some of the population items that this report covers. One exercise introduces the concepts of race and Spanish origin and the other shows how to derive such measures as family composition and size.

Primers 6 and 7 feature the two microfiche products that offer complete count and sample estimate data for small areas. When used together, these extracts from Summary Tape Files (STFs) 1 and 3 yield over 200 tables of data for areas as small as enumeration districts and block groups. *Primer 6* features the complete-count data found on STFs 1A and 1C microfiche; *Primer 7* uses a similar format to show sample estimate data found on STFs 3A and 3C. Each Primer includes exercises that show how to derive new variables from these rich resources and facsimilies of the fiche frames so that you can see exactly the data they offer. *Primer 6,* in addition, includes a detailed exercise on the geographic hierarchy. Without this understanding, users cannot locate data on these fiche for a specific areas.

Product Primers are for sale at $1.00 each (25 percent discount for orders of 100 or more going to a single address) from Customer Services (Publications), Data User Services Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. Write to the College Curriculum Support Project, Data User Services Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, to receive examination copies. □

Videotex News Service

The School of Journalism at the University of Western Ontario, London, Canada, has been producing a daily videotex news service for Prairie farmers since early 1982. A number of reports on this work are now available from Henry Overduin, senior editor, Westex News, School of Journalism, The University of Western Ontario, London, Canada, N6A 5B7.

"Westex News: An Experiment in Videotex Journalism."—This is a general description of the Westex News experiment, outlining its purpose, data base organization, news sources and research possibilities.

"Videotex News and Advertising: An Editorial Perspective."—Focusing on the advertising potential of videotex, this paper outlines a suggested "multiple-sponsorship" approach and comments on some of the traditional editorial-advertising conflicts as they may arise in a videotex context.

"The First Six Months of Westex News: March-August, 1982."—This paper reports in some detail on the operations of the first six months. It provides a content analysis, hit list analysis, details of funding, staff comments and reactions, and a brief overview of research in progress. □

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